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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Monthly Report -- Tel Aviv Bureau

FROM:

Chief, Operations Group

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

February 1988

STAT

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

1.

C/MOD

2.

3.

C/ESG

4.

5.

C/FED

6.

7.

C/ADD

8.

9.

C/HED

10.

11.

C/Computer Operations

12.

13.

14.

15.

Retain/Destroy

FBIS-6011-88
7 March 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT: Monthly Report -- Tel Aviv Bureau -- February 1988

I. GENERAL

A. U.S. efforts to reinvigorate the stalled peace process brought a new round of shuttle diplomacy 25 February to 5 March, with Secretary of State Shultz holding talks in Jerusalem, Amman, Cairo, Riyadh, and London, where King Husayn was on a private visit. The "Shultz Plan" has elicited very few positive signals from Arab capitals, the responses from Syria and Jordan being particularly discouraging, while the Israeli response has been primarily along party lines: Shamir's Likud readying a counterproposal and Peres' Labor urging acceptance of the U.S. initiative. There is much speculation that the need to formulate a definitive Israeli Government response to the plan could well be the issue that brings down the national unity government, forcing early elections.

B. Meanwhile the unrest in the territories continues, and the casualty figures continue to climb. As the 3d month of disturbances comes to an end, there have been 80 killed and over 650 wounded in more than 4,800 violent disturbances. With its international image being severely tarnished, the Israeli Government, along with the military authorities, is seeking to control the number of abuses of power by IDF soldiers, but at the same time finds itself in the uncomfortable position of having to lengthen the active duty commitment for reservists out of the need for more manpower in the territories. Little or no optimism over a foreseeable end to the unrest is apparent in either the government or the public at large.

C. The unrest and the new peace moves have brought the bureau's wordage up to levels that have not been seen since 1984 and early 1985. The bureau produced 316,200 and 308,050 publishable words in January and February, respectively, all with a Hebrew section lacking one monitor and training two others.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. Prompted by a request for information from Headquarters, the bureau investigated the nature and

availability of the Palestine Press Service, subsequently beginning a 1-month trial subscription. The service produces in English a morning press review from West Bank Arabic papers and an afternoon news roundup from a variety of sources. After initially filing a representative sample of the entire afternoon news roundup, the bureau currently produces a press service log, which will continue until a final evaluation of the source is made in mid-March.

2. The bureau was involved in the intensive coverage of reports on the kidnapping in Lebanon of Marine Lieutenant Colonel Richard Higgins, contributing some timely unique reporting as Amal and IDF elements cooperated to locate the victim. A personal involvement is felt at the bureau as some of the staffers know Lt Col Higgins, who had delivered the keynote address at the 1987 Marine Corps birthday ball.

3. After a year of unmonitorable reception, the bureau requested and received approval to drop coverage of the (Clandestine) Free Voice of Iran in Persian.

C. Lateral Services

1. During the Shultz shuttle to the Middle East, the bureau was in regular contact with the secretary's chief of security and the local RSO to provide updates on media reports of disturbances and security-related incidents.

2. Topping February's "Hit Parade" chart at the bureau, a series of six commentaries in HA'ARETZ by Ze'ev Schiff on "The War of the Territories" were refiled to embassies in London, Riyadh, and Damascus at the embassies' request, following a report on the commentaries from the ambassador in Tel Aviv.

D. Technical

1. The three extra complete FBA-1 workstations that were received in Tel Aviv's initial equipment shipment were sent on to other bureaus, two to Hong Kong and one to Bangkok.

2. The bureau received ERB approval to retain its four IBM computers. They will be used in various administrative and technical applications.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

1. Junior Editor [] was promoted to GS-10 effective 14 February.

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2. Hebrew section chief [] received a quality step increase and Hebrew monitors []

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[redacted] were granted special achievement awards in recognition of their sustained high-quality performance and dedication during a long-time staff shortage that was punctuated by periods of intense bureau activity.

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3. [redacted] a new Hebrew monitor, entered on duty on the 28th, finally bringing the section up to full strength.

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4. Communications operator [redacted] was promoted to FBN 5/3.

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5. Bureau Chief [redacted] returned from R & R in the United States. The chief took the opportunity of his travels to have short coordination TDY's at Headquarters, London Bureau and BBC, and Nicosia Bureau.

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IV. VISITS

Budget and Finance Officer [redacted] visited the bureau TDY on the 19th.

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[redacted]
Chief, FBIS Tel Aviv Bureau

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cc: JN, NC

Attachment: Production Report